Spring 1995 ◆ Number 3

The Women's Quarterly

"That's No White Male, That's My Husband!"

Ellen Ladowsky explains why women will deliver the death blow to affirmative action

As the war over affirmative action heats up, defenders of America's system of quotas and preferences are attempting to draft new footsoldiers: women. At the beginning of March, Jesse Jackson held a press conference to denounce President Clinton's decision to review all federal preferential hiring programs, strategically flanked by leaders of the National Organization for Women, the Feminist Majority Foundation and the National Committee on Pay Equity. Katherine Spillar, national coordinator for the Feminist Majority Foundation, accused opponents of affirmative action of concealing the potential harm that could be done to women "because they know affirmative action for women is popular — and they dare not wake a sleeping giant, that is a majority of the American electorate."

Yet that "giant," it turns out, is already awake — and running in the opposite direction. Although polls show affirmative action continues to be popular among blacks, its popularity among women is collapsing. A recent *Washington Post* poll found that 69% of women (and 76% of men) oppose affirmative action for women. In California, where voters will be asked to cast a ballot on an anti-affirmative action measure in 1996, early polling suggests that women's support for this "Civil Rights Initiative," as it is called, is almost as strong as white males', according to pollster Arnold Steinberg, chief strategist for the initiative. Steinberg acknowledges that much can happen between now and election day but he stresses that women — 53% of the California electorate — will be the linchpin of any campaign strategy. If he

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Drawing by Stephen Quinlan

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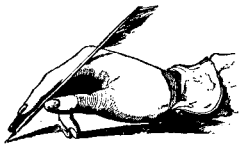
Diary



The Tyranny of Children

A couple of months ago I attended my first "Parents' Night" at my daughter's nursery school. Dimly remembering Parents' Nights from my own childhood, I put on a plain skirt, blouse and pumps; my husband, a dark suit and tie. As we entered the little classroom, I suddenly felt the same flush of embarrassment as when I've arrived at a party wrongly dressed. All the other parents — even those who were nearing 40 — looked like 21-year-old MTV veejays. This is not to say that they were casually dressed, either. They wore what they might to a dance club: leather jackets rakishly unzipped; miniskirts; "tailored" jeans.

I should add that our nursery school is not located in some bohemian quarter of the city; it's situated in a local Jewish Y. Everything else about the classroom was as I remember from my own preschool days — the colorful jumble of building blocks, the exhibition of messy abstracts, the caged, miserable rabbit, the evocative smell of powdered paints.

As my husband and I huddled in a corner, sipping our plastic cups of tepid apple juice, I had a small epiphany: Mothers and fathers of my generation are throwing away their authority over their children. If they would not dress or act like parents on Parents' Night, when would they?

We see the effects of this parental abdication all the time — at the playground, in supermarket aisles, in restaurants and airport lounges, the places where children are inclined to act badly. Suddenly a scene will erupt. A three-foot-high offender will grab something he shouldn't, demons in his eyes. And his mother and father, towering over him in their Gap "weekender" outfits, will seem suddenly to shrink like Alice before the angry cards. They'll beg the child. Pleadingly, they'll offer him a treat. Finally the father's voice, most gratingly, will dissolve into an unmanly whine: "I know you're upset, Ryan, I understand, but you've got to put that back. Listen to me sweetie...." Observers may be forgiven for wishing to see the child whacked; I'm always resisting the urge to whack the parents.

My own parents never hit me (excluding the occasional light cuff across the back of the head, a blow my brothers and I became very adept at ducking). But they did have a way of shooting us a glance that, Medusa-like, would instantly turn us into stone. They didn't have to smack us, or even yell at us very often, because we had learned over time that their authority was arbitrary and absolute. We might not have always respected their judgment, but we respected their size. This was as it should be. Children rarely study John Locke. They do not ponder the appropriate uses of power in a democratic society. Anyone who has spent an afternoon sitting on the ledge of a sandbox knows the fierceness that even the quietest digger of holes is capable of when his tunnel is trampled.

Yet somehow parents have come to treat their children not as raw specimens of humanity, in need of educating and civilizing, but as tiny citizens in their own nations of families, with rights equal to their parents. Hence the frequency with which parents encourage children to address adults by their first names, as social peers.

I'm not entirely sure how this way of child-rearing spread. Certainly the legacy of the '60s left behind a lingering aversion to authority figures. Feminists demolished the very useful role of the father as the remote, judicial parent who imposes order at the end of the day. Part of it might be, too, that mothers are giving birth later in life than their own mothers did, and they are over-educated for the task: The bits of child psychology they've picked up drown their instinctive good judgment (i.e. "Get in the damn stroller — *now*!"). As well, perhaps, more mothers are working when their children are very young and, guilt-ridden, they are afraid to offend their children further by being stern.

But I think the main reason for this parental squeamishness was displayed that evening at my daughter's nursery school: Mothers and fathers of my generation have difficulty accepting their age. They have an irrational fear of becoming like their own parents. They don't even want to be their children's parents. But as my husband's grandmother once shrewdly observed, the quickest way to terrify a toddler is to let him look around at all the adults in the room and discover, "You mean, I'm in charge?"

This is not to say that parents shouldn't act youthfully. The director of my daughter's nursery school — who has been around so long that some of the pupils' parents attended the school under her — is a truly magical woman, in no way "old." She is like a good fairy from a bedtime story, the merry elder who has never ceased being able to imagine the world from a child's point of view. The children worship her. She, them. But they get away with nothing. When my daughter bit another girl ("savagely," as the director described it, smiling), she told me there had been "no discussion whatsoever," not even a coerced apology. She'd marched my daughter inside, sat her at a table, and there they remained in silence. After a few moments, the director said that there would be no playing outside for little girls who bit other little girls. Did my daughter understand? Yes, she replied, sullenly. Very well then, out you go.

There have been no further incidents — of biting, anyway.

- Danielle Crittenden

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"We like to think of it as a people place."

Cartoon by Charles Jaffé

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Correspondence

Shocked and appalled? Amused? Lonely? Do write! Send correspondence to the Editor, The Women's Quarterly, *2111 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 550, Arlington, Va. 22201-3057. You may also fax your comments to 703/243-9230. Bear in mind, your letter may be edited for length.*

I loved Anne Roche Muggeridge's piece on wolf whistles (Winter 1995). It evoked a wonderful, healthy, exuberant male appreciation of women that we've all but forgotten in our studiously P.C. society, at least among the educated classes. There's a related phenomenon I've observed that I call "sweet honks," and it's practiced by truck drivers on the interstate who look down from their cabs at the legs of female automobile drivers they pass and signal their appreciation by a pair of ever-so-gentle toots on the horn. It seems quite harmless and actually suggests that these guys might be looking out for females in trouble — that they're knights of the road in a sense.

Other articles troubled me a little. The lawyer hit with the multimillion dollar sexual harassment verdict sounded like a vulgar boor who should have been booted out of his firm long ago for conduct unbecoming a gentleman. The piece opposing compensatory pay for mommy-trackers made it sound as though raising children is merely a hobby, like stamp collecting, and that childless Type-A yuppies are the kind of women we ought to reward in the workplace.

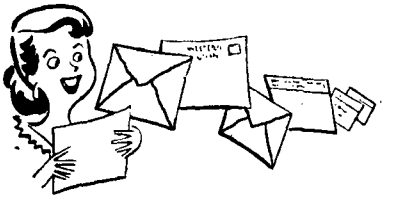
CHARLOTTE ALLEN
Washington, D.C.

Where have you been all my life? You're my kind of women's magazine.

P.S. I grew up in the '40s and '50s when women could be both gutsy and glamorous.

ANNABELLE ANDRADE
Galesburg, Ill.

Since the publication of my book *Who Stole Feminism?* (excerpted in your winter issue), the leadership of the American Association of University Women has reacted to my criticism of their "self-esteem" research on girls by setting up a hot line:



800/821-4364. Callers are sent a memo entitled "Erroneous Charges in *Who Stole Feminism?*" and given tips on how to attack me both personally and professionally.

I have written a response to these charges and asked the AAUW to publish it in their monthly newsletter, *Outlook.* Interested readers of *The Women's Quarterly* may wish to call the hot line to request copies of my response and to urge the AAUW to publish it. Should they refuse to send you a copy, I would be happy to provide one. Please write to me c/o Philosophy Department, Clark University, Worcestor, Mass. 01610.

CHRISTINA HOFF SOMMERS
Brookline, Mass.

In "Daycare Dearest" (Winter 1995) Cathy Rindner Tempelsman wisely recommends that as a society we should learn to identify and act upon what is true, even if it is not convenient.

Children are messy, annoying and noisy. With patience and discipline by adults, children can become neater, more productive and considerate.

Taking care of your children does not mark you as privileged. Taking care of your children is a responsibility that is as relevant to childbirth as is conception. If American parents aren't prepared to rise to the appropriate responsibility level and to stop concentrating on their own convenience, we are simply denying reality in expecting institutions to do what parents will not.

JOYCE BEHR
New York, N.Y.

Could you please send me information as to a subscription to your publication? I have a niece who was involved in "women's studies" and I would like to try to counter the damage (advertantly done) to an otherwise nice person. Thank you.

NAME WITHHELD
Fontana, Calif.

The Women's Quarterly is indeed an amazing publication, which will contribute greatly to everybody's happiness and success simply because it is honest. Men have not been prolific writers about "feminism," but on the few occasions when we do have viewpoints to express, our messages are twisted around so the females offended can act nasty without reason.

KARL E. BRANDT
Jessup, Md.

I was absolutely thrilled with the content of your journal! Your "Diary" on the personal and political was especially well constructed. Congratulations on not just a cogent argument but unlike Catharine MacKinnon's own, a very readable one as well.

STEPHANIE HERMAN
Aurora, Colo.

What world are you living in? I have never read your *Quarterly* but if it's anything this Mona Charen wrote [sic], why don't you just keep woman [sic] as second-class citizens at home and pregnant and controlled by men and used for sex. It's hard for women to accept that the laws don't protect women, but to be in denial to make yourself feel more powerful is worse.

ANONYMOUS

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A First Lady on Wheels?

TWQ launches its series of interviews with the spouses of presidential candidates by talking to ***Wendy Lee Gramm.*** Her passions: deregulation, rollerblades, her children and her husband Phil

If Texas Senator Phil Gramm succeeds in his ambition to win the presidency, his wife, Wendy, will achieve many firsts — among them, becoming the first presidential spouse with a Ph.D. and the first Asian-American to occupy the White House. Like Hillary Rodham Clinton, Wendy Lee Gramm is a modern woman right down to her triple-barrelled name. She has simultaneously raised a family while juggling a powerful career and the political demands of her husband. Her entry in Who's Who *runs only one line shorter than his. Unlike Mrs. Clinton, however, Mrs. Gramm claims to aspire to no official role within the administration.*

Wendy Lee Gramm

Mrs. Gramm was born in Hawaii in 1945, the third of four children. She attended Wellesley College as an undergraduate three years ahead of Hillary Rodham, and wrote her doctoral thesis at Northwestern University in economics. She met Phil Gramm in 1969. Gramm, then a professor at Texas A&M, was so smitten with her thesis that he gate-crashed the selection committee that interviewed her for a job. He persuaded her to come to Texas as a professor, and very shortly afterwards, to become his wife. Their two sons were born in College Station, Texas. In 1978, Phil Gramm's election to the House of Representatives took them to Washington, where they have lived ever since in a yellow brick house in Northwest D.C. Mrs. Gramm landed a post in Ronald Reagan's Office of Management and Budget. Then, from 1988 to 1993, she served as chairman of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. Her husband's presidential bid may put her latest project on hold: creating a center for regulatory studies. Today she serves on several corporate and volunteer boards, including the board of the Independent Women's Forum (which sponsors this publication). She is also an adjunct professor at the University of Texas at Arlington.

***Claudia Winkler** interviewed Mrs. Gramm in her living room, lined with the senator's collection of Audubon engravings. Mrs. Gramm had just arrived from rollerblading; she sat down, can of Sprite in hand.*

"My grandparents came to work in the sugar cane fields."

TWQ. You are about to become an object of curiosity to more people than you've ever been before. I'd like to ask you about your background. Where did you grow up?

Gramm. Hawaii, on the north shore of Oahu. I grew up in the country close to the ocean. It was a very casual, wonderful childhood. You didn't really have to wear shoes to school until the third or fifth grade.

TWQ. You had at least one immigrant grandparent?

Gramm. All four. My grandparents came from Korea. My father's mother came over when she was very young with her parents. On my mother's side, my grandfather came over, leaving some family behind in Korea. Then my grandmother — his wife — came over as a picture bride.

Drawing by Dick Wright

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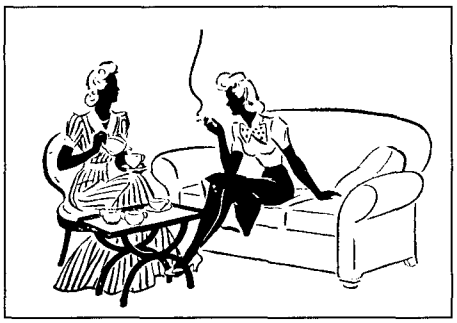
TWQ. Really? He selected her out of a book?

Gramm. That's right. Out of a picture book. I understand some family back in Korea went to check out her family. This would have been somewhere between 1907 and 1920. My grandparents came to work in the sugar cane fields. There weren't many Koreans who came over — they were not a large percentage of the population. My parents were born in Hawaii. I'm third generation Korean-American.

The great story is that my father — who was the second son — went off to college during the depression. He worked his way through Tri-State College in Angola, Indiana. He majored in engineering, came back to Hawaii and worked at Waialua Sugar — the same company where my grandfather had worked cutting sugar cane! My father started off as a draftsman, and became the first Asian-American ever to be a manager at that company. Eventually he was vice president for administration. You know, later, when I was to be confirmed as chairman of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, Reagan and Bush would work this story into some of their talks. They would remind people that [the commission] regulated pork bellies but also sugar cane futures.

TWQ. Did you grow up speaking Korean?

Gramm. Not at all. See, my grandparents wanted to be assimilated and they wanted to learn English. My mother remembers her mother speaking among her friends in Korean. My father remembers speaking Korean until he was about four or five years old. But they both learned English. My parents don't speak Korean and I don't have any of it either. The only Korean content to my life was the food.



TWQ. And so have you continued that? Do you enjoy Korean cooking?

Gramm. Yeah, but I don't cook anymore. I can cook some things but there are many things you can get in the grocery store now, too. Like kim-chi, for example, which is pickled cabbage.

TWQ. What were your aspirations when you were growing up?

Gramm. Oh, I don't know that I had aspirations. We had a pretty happy life. We always expected to go on to college but I don't know that I had any grand schemes. I wasn't one of these kids that said I'm going to be a doctor.

TWQ. What were your tastes? Did you like to read or were you an outdoors type?

Gramm. I was an outdoors type. My sister and I would play, ride around on our bikes, play softball in the street. I read — I loved those little orange biographies — but I wasn't voracious. In high school I was really good at math.

TWQ. Did you bump into Hillary Rodham when you went to Wellesley?

Gramm. Well, we must have overlapped by a year because I was there until '66 and she was there until '68 but I don't remember meeting her. With 1,700 women you got to know the people in your dorms pretty well and in some of the things that I did, like dance group. I didn't do the college government or the newspaper or things like that. I majored in economics.

Phil's favorite thesis: Mothers will accept lower wages for flexible hours

TWQ. What turned you into a free marketeer?

Gramm. I think, first of all, when you study economics you're studying markets and how they work. Then when you teach, you are always looking for an example of how the markets work and it's astonishing — free markets work very well. Then you start looking at the unintended effects when constraints are put on markets; say, a minimum wage. It defeats the purpose of what it is trying to do. You're trying to help the low-income worker but by increasing the wage you make firms unwilling to hire such workers. So the workers get no job experience and are made worse off. When we stop and think about it, the free enterprise system in this country has created enormous opportunities. My grandparents came from Korea and yet here I could go to Wellesley — that's quite remarkable. And my grandparents weren't brilliant or talented — they weren't like some of these people who came over and just found their pot of gold. They're average people! They didn't make a lot of money but they did better themselves. My parents bettered themselves and created more opportunity.

TWQ. I've read that Phil Gramm fell in love with your dissertation before you ever met him.

Gramm. [Laughs].

TWQ. What was the subject?

Gramm. Married women in the labor force, believe it or not. How the household allocated the time of its members

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and the effect of children on the women's supply of labor. That was in the late '60s, and I developed a model. I put the effect of children in there. And then what I did, which was unusual, was I developed a data set. I went out and conducted my own survey of women teachers about their labor force participation, what their wages were, what their family income was, the ages of their children, how much time they spent on different activities. Then I looked at another set of women, substitute teachers mostly, who were only working part-time. The findings — and they really confirm common sense — were that women are indeed very much affected by the ages of their children and that they are willing to pay a premium in order to have a flexible work schedule. They are willing to accept a substantially lower wage in order to work when they choose to work.

It was fun. It was interesting. I think what Phil was looking at was — in terms of a résumé — here was someone whose dissertation would probably get some publications [laughs]. But I am not so sure he just fell in love with my dissertation.

"Have two more kids than you think you can stand."

TWQ. Did you hope for marriage and children as a young woman?

Gramm. As I remember, somebody asked me, "What's going to be your labor force participation rate over your life cycle?" This was when I was getting my Ph.D. And I said, "In the next five years I don't plan to be married and I certainly don't plan to have any kids." I was 25 then. I saw myself as working really hard on my career — publish or perish. I didn't even fully expect that I would stay at Texas A&M for the rest of my academic career. Well, within five years I was married and I had two kids.

TWQ. And did you stay in the labor force?

Gramm. I kept working the whole time. I had my kids in the summer session that I was off. Academics lends itself to combining activities.

TWQ. What kind of help did you have?

Gramm. I went through five housekeepers until I found one who suited me. I remember there was one lady who didn't last too long because she kept handling all the bottles, pacifiers and toys. I hadn't gotten to the stage of saying we don't have to be perfect, everything doesn't have to be sterilized, the kid can eat some dirt. Finally, I found a housekeeper who stayed with us all the time we were in Texas.

TWQ. Some conservatives believe it's a mother's duty to stay home with her children if she can afford to. Are you concerned about the influence of that view in your party?

Gramm. I like to think what really defines the Republican party, what really differentiates us from the Democrats, is our vision of the role of government in our lives. Who is making the decisions — is it us or is it the government? On issues like what is the role of a woman in a family, for example, I think that people have a lot of different views. I like to think that there isn't any one that really dominates. My belief is that you have to find what's right for you and your family and for your children. There are trade-offs. People have different perspectives. I love our Mormon friends, for example, who say they want to have a dozen children. I say, my goodness, "How can you afford it?" They *choose* to afford it. I keep thinking that I was a little bit too … well, let's put it this way. I had my two kids and stopped because it was expensive, it was stressful, it was hard. But I sort of wish I had more. When both my kids went away to college, I went around telling all my friends of child-bearing age, "Have two more kids than you think you can stand." And they all said, "Get away from me!" [laughs]. Easy to say when the kids are gone. I'm not sure I wouldn't have gone crazy.

TWQ. Do you consider yourself a feminist?

Gramm. I knew you'd ask that question. I don't know all the ins and outs, and I haven't read in depth what people who call themselves feminists think. I'd say, well, women and men should have the freedom to choose what they want to do, without other people imposing their views on them about what's right and wrong. Obviously, I'm not talking about what's right and what's wrong in terms of moral issues, or breaking the law. I'm talking about what's right for their families, in terms of a mother working or not working, for example. I don't think we know what makes people become good people. What is a "successful" child? I don't think we have all the answers.

TWQ. One thing we do know is that stable two-parent families are good for children. What can government do to shore up families?

Gramm. One of the first things you have to do is make government at least neutral. Government has substituted government programs for what used to be family responsibilities or community responsibilities or church responsibilities. We have become more dependent and look to govern-

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ment for answers. This causes private charitable institutions to kind of wither away, and that's not good. And the government has done a lot to hurt families directly. Not only the marriage tax. AFDC is a program that has created incentives to drive the father away from home. If the father is at home, then he's a welfare cheat. You have a lot of households headed by women who are struggling. The thing that worries me is that you have generations where you don't have a father in the home to provide the kind of stability that kids want.

TWQ. Do you see these problems just getting worse?

Gramm. No! I think the whole point of what's happened in these last elections is that people have recognized that government has created a lot of the problems and that the so-called solutions haven't worked. Now, we might not know what the right answer is but people are saying, "What we have hasn't worked, let's admit that and let's look at other approaches." In the welfare area there are lots of experiments being done in the states. So I'm optimistic.

"Our whole economy is built on the notion that people take risks. If they're lucky and work hard, they benefit from that risk."

TWQ. A lot of Americans seem to be afraid of the global economy. As an economist, how would you reassure them?

Gramm. I think that the reason why people get nervous about the market is that competition can be scary. I also think that because we have had so many years of government programs, we don't have as robust an economy as we could have. There aren't as many opportunities. That makes people more insecure. What I would do to reassure them is to point out that a global economy, free trade basically, creates more opportunities for American companies to sell goods abroad. Many of the most successful companies are doing a lot of business abroad. It's a vast new market out there of people with growing incomes who need our expertise and our products. When we have markets open to international trade we will have a strong and growing economy. People don't have to feel afraid that they're going to lose their jobs. What we want is to have so many opportunities that if you don't like your boss or how you're treated you can say, "Good-bye. I'm off. I'm gone."

The most important thing is to make sure that our economy is growing and that we get control of the regulatory structure — that we're not imposing so many regulations that people don't have alternatives, including the alternative to work out of their home.

TWQ. You have been both a regulator and a deregulator. Do you have a philosophy of regulation? How does one know how much regulation is too much?

Gramm. You look at the cost and benefits very carefully. You look at the alternatives. You have to go back and say, "Is this a problem that government should be solving? Is this a systemic problem or a one-time anecdote? If somebody falls down and skins his knee because he was not careful — is this something that government can really get involved in?" The theory of regulation says that before you get government involved there has to be some reason why the market hasn't worked, why it isn't self-correcting. Even if there is a market failure — somehow the market isn't going to be self-correcting here and people are not going to learn to be careful — before you say everybody has to wear knee pads, you have to look at the cost and benefits. You have to decide if government can fix it and at what level, local, state or federal? People have forgotten about these things. We cannot always prevent people from hurting themselves.

What's worse is in the financial area you have very big companies running around saying, "I'm not very sophisticated, I didn't understand these derivatives when I bought them, and I was speculating in them but you shouldn't have sold them to me." That's very scary. Our whole economy is built on the notion that people take risks. If they're lucky and work hard they benefit from that risk. We shouldn't tax that profit away because we want people to risk their money, to go with their ideas. Likewise, if they lose money, we don't want to indemnify them for the loss. You have to have people who are willing to put resources in some idea that may or may not be a good idea. Otherwise, we'll never know what the good ideas are. Government is not going to figure out what the good ideas are. It's private enterprise, it's individuals who are going to decide. My great concern is that we are beginning to vilify profits and indemnify losses. And that destroys the system. The Soviet Union fell because of that.

TWQ. Are you your husband's chief deregulation advisor?

Gramm. [Laughs] Phil's a pretty good deregulator himself and he's got a great staff. People automatically assume that I'm whispering in Phil's ear about commodities or

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derivatives or something like that. I never talk to him about derivatives. We talk about Aggie football, or what are we going to have for dinner, shall we order a pizza, Jeff called today … whatever.

"Phil doesn't feel he has to be loved by everyone."

TWQ. Some people — particularly women — see Sen. Gramm as mean, hard-edged. What do you make of that?

Gramm. What I would say is that Phil is direct and very honest. He's not wishy-washy about issues. He's also a person who doesn't feel he has to be loved by everyone. If you ask him about an issue, he will tell you. In some ways, the flip side of that is that he's quite principled. He doesn't change his mind because his views are unpopular. In the health care debate, when all the polls — even the Republican pollsters — were saying that American people wanted health care reform and many Republican senators were signing up for decaffeinated socialism, Phil said, "Over my dead body." He was going to oppose this and it was wrong for America. He went out with several senators — John McCain, Paul Coverdell and Dan Coats and some others — and they did hearings all over America.

Also, some conservative positions are viewed as "mean." Liberals will say cutting federal programs — like education or nutrition — is "mean." Phil would say that the issue is not cutting spending on education or nutrition. The issue is *who* is going to do the spending. Is the federal government going to take your money and spend it, or is it going to be you spending your own money? Phil says returning choices to the people is the right thing to do and that's not mean.

TWQ. What will be your role in your husband's presidential campaign?

Gramm. Well, I've always done a whole bunch of different things in Phil's campaigns. Being a surrogate for Phil is important. Getting out there and talking to folks is a large part of it. People want to know what's Phil like and they want to know what his family is like.

"Out of the many, we have made one."

TWQ. If your husband is elected, you will be the first Asian-American in the White House. Is this a triumph of multicultural America?

Gramm. It's a triumph of just plain America. It says a lot about our system that ordinary people from all over the world can become really, truly Americans. I'm proud of my heritage. It's a wonderful story, but it's not a unique story. Like me, so many others have come to America from different backgrounds. Yet out of the many, we have made one. That's a different notion from multiculturalism, which is almost a rejection of our heritage as a country. Multiculturalism tends to promote balkanization and I don't think that's helpful.

TWQ. What aspects of the job of First Lady appeal to you?

Gramm. Oh gosh … when people talk about the role of First Lady, my view is simply that a marriage is a partnership, and husbands and wives are teams in a lot of ways, and so every woman who's been in that position has done a different thing according to how the husband and wife have worked together. Maybe there shouldn't be a "First Lady" mold because people have different personalities, different likes and dislikes. My view about Phil and Phil's job is, Look folks, he's the one who's running for that job, not me, all right? And I'm willing to help. But I don't want a real job in the government. There's just too much in being — I don't know — a sounding board. The job of President is very tough. It's enormous. It's as if you've got 50 little brush fires that are going every day and you've got a squirt gun. You can squirt a little bit each day to keep maybe one from blowing up and new ones are popping up all the time. In the meantime, you also have to do all these other things like meet all the visiting dignitaries and the groups that come in that want you for a photo-op. So how do you do all of this and still be accessible and hear what's happening in the country? I think that the wife, or the spouse, can be very helpful in being somebody else to talk to and in creating a zone of quiet. You need to have a friend who isn't there wanting something from you — a position or whatever.

"Our roles aren't set in stone."

TWQ. Your husband said on national TV that when he was courting you he went down on his knee and promised to spend his life trying to make you happy. Did he succeed?

Gramm. Well, we call this "revealed preference" in economics. But anyway, the answer is yeah! We're going on 25 years of marriage. He's affectionate. He calls me up in the

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middle of the day to say he loves me. Sometimes he used to leave the message with the secretary, back when I used to have a secretary. A good friend is always there, and I think that's a real important part of being married — is having a good friend.

TWQ. Politics is very demanding of family life.

Gramm. It really is. You give up some things but you get a lot of things. Phil takes me and my preferences into account. So we don't do a lot of the charity dinners because we choose to be at home with the kids. We'll go to the Eastern Shore when we can, or all sit around even if it's just to watch a football game on TV.

The real beauty of political life these days is that you don't have to have roles that are set in stone. ◆

Claudia Winkler is chief editorial writer for Scripps Howard.

But Will Christmas Dinner Get Made if the O. J. Trial Is Still Being Televised?

The Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia has ruled that high schools' scheduling of girls' basketball season at a different time from boys' basketball season is unconstitutional under the equal protection clause of the West Virginia Constitution. Winter is considered high season for basketball, when spectators are willing to buy tickets to watch boys' teams play. The less lucrative and crowd-drawing girls' teams generally play in the fall. Not anymore, at least in West Virginia. The ruling will force cash-strapped schools to build equivalent athelet-ic facilities for girls so they can play alongside the boys during the winter season.

In a dissenting opinion, Justice Richard J. Neely wryly observed that, "My office is not entirely ignorant of the interest that women have in sports, but Christmas dinner is seldom delayed in America because wives and mothers are sitting around the television set watching the games."

More Basketball News From West Virginia:

How Do You Say "&%$#! — I Missed It!" in Sign Language?*

The same West Virginia court also held that a deaf student was entitled to the services of a signer while participating in extracurricular basketball.

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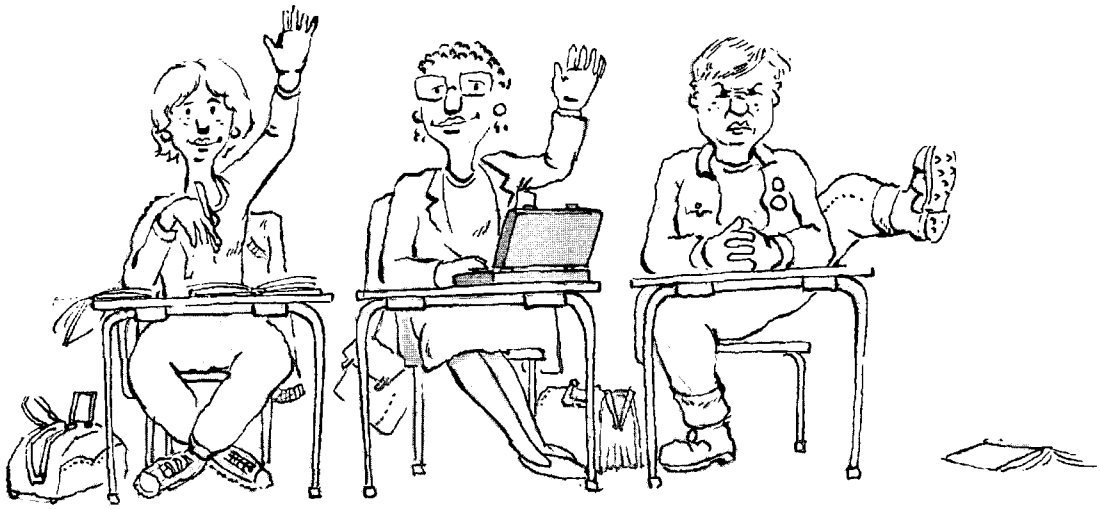

Students Who Stomp in Seminars

Two veteran Women's Studies professors, *Daphne Patai* and *Noretta Koertge*, describe how their classrooms came to resemble fundamentalist revival meetings

"I began to get some bad vibes, as we used to say in those days, when I started teaching a feminist theory class which became a standard offering for the Women's Studies curriculum. And what I did there was to rehearse the different feminist positions: radical feminist, liberal, Marxist. The psychoanalytic feminists were just beginning to make an impact. And, of course, I would come into class and offer what I thought were balanced views on these different texts. Some of my comments were very critical because I thought the texts were philosophically incoherent and politically disastrous — not to put too fine a point on it.

"But that was the feminist literature of the time, it had that character and I thought it was important for students to work through it and to hone their critical skills, to be able to separate some of the texts from one another and to be able to ask themselves, 'Now, what kind of world would we live in if this person got her way? Is it a world that would be more just, more equitable, or is it a world in which you'd sort of change one class of oppressors for another?'

"And that started to get me into trouble. Some students were tremendously irate, and would run and tell tales out of class. You weren't supposed to criticize the feminist text. One of them said to me that she was shocked and horrified, and it was very upsetting to her that I was criticizing the historical accuracy, for example, of parts of [Shulamith] Firestone's account, where I said, 'The scholarly literature does not support these claims.' So there were students who were being perturbed by this, and I thought: Well, that's okay; they need to learn how to deal with this.

"Then, at the request of the Women's Studies people, I signed on to do a senior seminar. As it turned out, this was a ghastly experience, one of the worst I've ever had in my life. I was doing a topic on mothers and daughters, which is probably like a red flag to a bull in a ring. And there was a group of really tough students — they called themselves 'dykes,' actually — who, in the first class meeting, just launched an all-out assault on me for having men on my reading list.

Drawings by Charles Jaffé

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"They came prepared with all this animus. One group sat in the back and actually stomped their feet and kind of hooted sometimes when they heard things they didn't like. And, by the way, this particular group, at the end of the semester when I was passing out teaching evaluations — you just pass out a stack and they grab one — they all took two apiece, and they were marking the lowest category for everything. They were sort of trying to stuff the ballot box with bad teacher evaluations. I caught them at it.

"I was told later, by a graduate student who felt guilty about the whole thing, that she had in fact sat in on a strategy session where specific plans were made — and she swore to this — to disrupt my classes and those of another professor, because we were not doing the right thing. And this was confirmed later, that this meeting had in fact taken place. Now, whether there were faculty instigating any of this, I don't know. But it happened. Needless to say, experiences like this start to sour you."

—an interview with "Anna," a professor of social sciences and Women's Studies.

The feminist persuasions prevailing in U.S. colleges and universities today often lead to consequences deeply subversive of the best academic traditions. Intolerance, anti-intellectualism and ideological policing produce work that is shaped — we would say distorted — by an ideological agenda. This may be acceptable in an institution whose denominational affiliations and instructional mission are a matter of record. But it hardly seems appropriate to require teachers in a state university or a private liberal arts college to profess adherence to feminism or to monitor the sex, race or ethnicity of the authors on their syllabuses. Nonetheless, as our investigations have shown, these practices are proudly "owned" by many feminist faculty.

As it pursues such actions, Women's Studies apparently disregards all historical evidence warning of what happens when ideas and those who express them are placed under ideological restrictions. We are concerned that the attempts to set up feminist alternatives to traditional disciplines, each with its own support networks, conferences and journals, are all too reminiscent of the efforts of "creation scientists" to represent themselves as the intellectual and professional equals of mainstream researchers. In both instances the methods of established science and rigorous intellectual inquiry are dismissed as biased, and radical departures from these methods are proposed to replace them. Creationists say that radioisotope dating must be thrown out because it is sheer atheism to assume that the laws of nature, including those governing radioactive decay, are time invariant. Could God not change the half-life of carbon-14 if He so desired? Many feminists find the values of objectivity and consistency shot through with patriarchal bias, and they argue — with breathtaking simplicity of mind — that these intellectual virtues were designed, and are being used, to enforce the entrenched power of the white male European elite.

The harmful pedagogical effects of such positions are obvious. Far too many Women's Studies classes now provide their students with what might be called "negative education." Instead of "learning to learn" (to use a slogan once popular in schools of education), these students are being taught to scorn both the content and methods of the liberal arts and sciences. But the classroom is not the right place for obeisance and anathema. And it is intolerable that Women's Studies students can come away from their courses with the unshakable conviction that

all women are victims, and that victims are, by virtue of their persecuted status, a morally superior breed. It is a fact, however, that Women's Studies classes instruct women in the use of coping strategies to deal with the "oppression" they are being taught to recognize; many feminist teachers pride themselves on this. It should come as no surprise, then, that some students insist on special dispensations to compensate them for past injustices, and claim that if a demand, such as the requirement to become competent in mathematics, is too exacting or a job too taxing, it is because women's different ways of "knowing" and performing are slighted by the entrenched patriarchy.

But a feminist education along these lines is sure to impede women's ability to function in the world at large. A concerned faculty colleague told us about a conversation she had

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had with a graduating senior. "The student told me she had a good job with a big company in a nearby city — actually it was just what she wanted — better than she expected. But when I congratulated her, she looked worried. 'Well, there's just one problem,' she said. 'You know, sexism, job discrimination, all that patriarchal stuff.' I asked her if anything weird had happened at the interview. She said no, but maybe that was because they saw on her résumé that she had a certificate in Women's Studies and were on good behavior. I tried to reassure her: 'You say they interviewed lots of people for the job? It sounds to me like you were the person they wanted and that they'll make some effort to keep you. I don't think you should expect trouble.' 'But it's still a patriarchal world out there,' the student said earnestly. 'And I'm just afraid that there will be sexist stuff on the job — maybe even stuff that I won't even recognize as being sexist.' I mumbled more words of reassurance, but the image which came to mind was that of certain holy men in India — I think they're called Jains — who walk around with gauze over their mouths to prevent them from accidentally inhaling a gnat and killing it."

All too often the "empowerment" promised by Women's Studies in fact has undermined students' ability to function effectively and has diminished their life options. Hypersensitizing young women to the obstacles they face may have gained feminism some docile converts, but the initiates have had to pay a steep price.

Religious movements provide an instructive comparative case to help us make sense of the more disturbing traits of academic feminism. New movements, whether religious or social, always undergo an initial period of struggle when the intellectual and psychological resources of their members are absorbed by the effort to gain recognition, and when energies are directed mostly against enemies outside the ranks. Ideological positions are kept simple at this stage; there is little discussion of the fine points of belief. Internal cohesion is not difficult to maintain because all who belong accept the movement's survival as a paramount goal. The movement's spokespersons tend to make far-reaching claims for the rights and liberties needed to gain legitimacy, chief among them the freedoms to be self-determining in matters of conscience, to propagate ideas, to voice criticism and to speak and act on the basis of conviction.

During the period of consolidation that follows, mundane tasks begin to predominate: the need to organize, define the faith and clarify ambiguities as beliefs are being formalized into a creed. Theological elaboration results from the movement's drive, as it becomes established, to enumerate the articles its followers must accept if they are to remain members in good standing. Hence an orthodoxy arises, as well as a hierarchy of persons entitled to declare and guard it. This development, in turn, leads to attempts to obtain conformity and enforce discipline and — inevitably — to inhibition of deviant beliefs. Tolerance is now seen as worse than weakness; it is a betrayal of the faith. To the true believer, there cannot be more than one valid truth or more than a single way to reach it.

In the later phases of a movement, therefore, declarations of faith tend to be much less inclusive than they had been during the movement's earlier years. Those who cannot agree to them quit, or they are expelled or silenced. Means of identifying and separating deviants are implemented so that discipline may be enforced. Deviance itself is demarcated by defining heterodoxy as well as orthodoxy. Proselytizing usually wanes at this stage, as energies are absorbed in the effort to unify and purify the movement internally and as intellectual homogeneity comes to matter more than diversity of ideas and the free discussion of them.

Unless a movement finds some way of accommodating the diversity of views that will always surface in a group not under siege, it survives— if it survives at all — as a sect. A sect sees itself as voluntarily and necessarily separated from the larger society, which it regards as beyond redemption by conversion or other means. Its members are encouraged to view themselves as a righteous remnant. Its saving message, which is utterly exclusive, suppresses debate and criticism. As a result, there is little intellectual development. Ideas tend to atrophy into fundamentalism, showing the mistrust and paranoia that usually accompany a narrow religiosity. Mandated beliefs and coercive institutions are used to erect protective ramparts around the group in order to keep enemies out and followers in. Intolerance is flaunted: One must believe all or one believes nothing. Sects are interesting historical phenomena, and often very moving ones, but because of their intransigence and isolation they have rarely had any major impact on world events.

Such a development is not inevitable. The history of Western religion offers a few notable exceptions to

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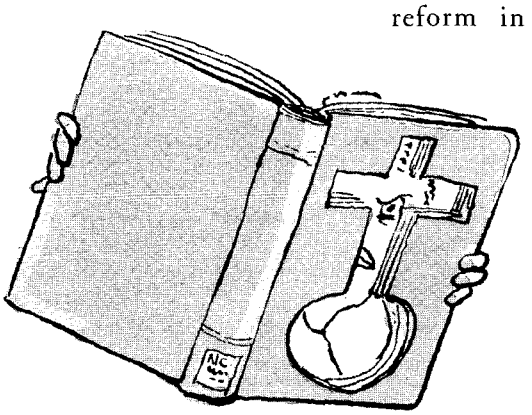
it, such as the Quakers and the Unitarians, whose trajectory from oppositional faction to established denomination evaded the extremes of political orthodoxy and sectarian isolation. But the process described here has been a common one in both Catholic and Protestant traditions, and its cautionary importance for movements borne by ideological zeal is, we believe, considerable.

It will seem a familiar pattern to many who have been involved with Women's Studies. As talk of women's oppression, exclusion and silencing at the hands of the patriarchy gained prominence in the late 1960s, sufficient cohesion developed for Women's Studies to get under way in the early 1970s — if not yet as a widespread moment, then as a tenacious force and an insistent voice for reform in



the academy. Shared beliefs were abundantly supplied by the developing discourse on feminism, in which the imperative to action, when not asserted outright, was always implicit. As the movement gained strength, the emerging agenda, kept simple at first (for example, "integrating women into the curriculum"), expanded in response to the hardening of ideological lines. The sense of mission that legitimized a growing obduracy of thought and speech was noted by most of the women we interviewed, although for some this sense was a nostalgic memory, while for others it acted as an incentive for them to dissent.

Feminism was not slow to develop its corps of theoreticians. But in the accommodating world of Women's Studies, "theory"— recently transmogrified into the more active-sounding "theorizing" — did not always demand a high level of analysis or substantive learning. In many programs, it meant little more than a tethering of precepts to simplistic ideological presuppositions. Instead of expanding intellectual horizons, this, in truth, led to intolerance, the presence and corrosive effect of which were mentioned by nearly everyone we spoke to [in researching our book]. Attempts were made to expose and label heterodoxy. Deviant opinion was dismissed as "liberal" or "radical," depending on who was dismissing whom; "false" feminists were distinguished from "true" ones; slanderous comments about one another by faculty members were replicated in students' mean-spirited bad-mouthing and their censorious behavior in the classroom.

One professor described her own growing awareness of this process: "I don't recall now how long it was before I realized that the intolerance and smugness of many of my students was a mirror image of feelings I had experienced privately and had heard my colleagues express publicly. I recalled the sense of self-satisfaction and complacency I felt when another woman — especially one who described herself as a feminist — revealed, through some word or gesture, the 'limits' of her feminist understanding compared to my own. In retrospect, it seemed to me that this smugness had, in fact, been an important component of my own identity as a 'feminist.' "

Like religious groups as they splinter, feminism also developed competing creeds, each rigidly embraced by its adherents, each dismissive of the others, each undebatable. Not surprisingly, excommunication, in the form of shunning and scapegoating, became common. The effort to propagate ideas broadly — once a major part of the agenda — tended to contract as the curriculum was pitched more and more narrowly to a self-selected audience of students who seek out the program on their own and form a pre-identified group of potential converts.

The insularity of such procedures, along with a certain proclivity in the women's movement to separatism, give Women's Studies programs a strong resemblance to religious sects. But the historical experience of sectarian groups ought to serve as a warning example, as should their tendency to slip into the kind of intellectual fundamentalism in which a handful of unexamined and unquestioned truths is believed to answer every question, solve every problem and fend off unwelcome criticism from the malevolent forces outside. This may sound excessively alarmist. Women's Studies programs do not, at the moment, have the means to transform their ideas into forced behavior patterns. But we should not therefore be lulled into complacency about the kind of world that would result if the power to impose and control were ever to be given to them. ◆

Daphne Patai and Noretta Koertge are the authors of Professing Feminism: Cautionary Tales from the Strange World of Women's Studies *(New Republic Books: 1994), from which this article is excerpted.*

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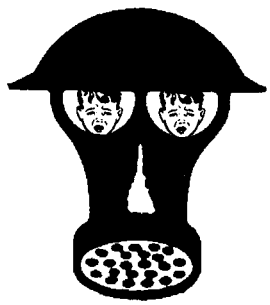
Mommy Will Be Home after the Bombardment



Two Views on Women in the Military

From Bosnia, *Peter Worthington* observes that women soldiers make good peacekeepers, if questionable mothers

Visoko, Bosnia

"Yes I miss my kids, but I'm a soldier, and here I am."

The "soldier" was Corporal Tracy Meisner, one of an eight-member section on front line duty in Bosnia with Canadian United Nations forces. The young mother is part of the "new" army — an army in which women serve in combat units. These women number perhaps 5% of the 2,000 Canadian soldiers in Bosnia and Croatia, the toughest UN peacekeeping job in the world at the moment.

In fact "peacekeeping" is a misnomer in Bosnia. Canadians in Visoko, just outside the protected zone around Sarajevo, perform a job better described as "war-watching," caught as they are between the harassing fire and mortars of Serbs and Muslims taking pot shots at each other. On this evening, the darkness marked with tracer bullets and muffled explosions, Cpl. Meisner had just come off "OP" duty: reporting and recording where the firing was coming from. As she entered the warmth and safety of the bunker and removed her flak jacket and blue helmet, her section commander, Master Corporal Sean Cowperwhaite, reminded her that it was her night to wash up after the evening meal. A male soldier joked: "About time you did real women's work, washing up!" Meisner laughed and said, what did he know about real women.

Their manner was teasing, friendly, respectful: typical of relations I'd observed between male and female troops during the weeks I spent in Bosnia, and other wars where women have been blended into combat units. Somewhat to my surprise — I'm a former airborne soldier going back to the Korean war — and contrary to worries that, among other problems, women would wreck the cohesion of a fighting force, the transition seems to have been remarkably painless.

When you ask the male troops how women in combat units are working out, there is almost universal approval. When the policy was first introduced, it didn't look hopeful. "Many in the first wave seemed to be doing it to make a point," recalls Major General Lew MacKenzie, former UN Commander in Sarajevo. "Many seemed to be doing it for vague feminist reasons rather than real interest in the military. But that's past. Now it works fine."

Among the Canadian troops in Bosnia, the women seemed to have a

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civilizing effect. In the bunker, male and female soldiers slept (chastely) side by side. As they relaxed or prepared to go on duty, they read or played cribbage together. The men appeared to appreciate being able to confide in the only woman present, discussing the problems of repeated peacekeeping postings — some soldiers are on their third six-month tour in Bosnia — and the hardship it imposes on their families. I overheard Meisner sympathizing with one soldier. She told him of her unease at being away from her kids, and how she looked forward to getting home. "But I joined the army before Bosnia happened, and as a soldier you take what comes. What's fair for men is fair for women ...." Grandparents are keeping an eye on her children. Her husband is also a soldier.

Another soldier drifted over to talk quietly. She was, I thought with amusement, a sort of den mother. Later she went back on duty to the OP, where her machine gun was waiting, night scope and range finder ready. Shots periodically hit the sandbag walls of the observation post; mortars fell short. Last year a Serbian antitank gun cut a young Canadian in half as he got out of his armored carrier. Being on UN duty in this area of what used to be Yugoslavia is dangerous by any standard. On infantry patrols, driving armored vehicles, being shot at, negotiating 15-ton double-trailed Kenworth trucks around hairpin mountain switchbacks, negotiating minefields, Canada's women soldiers in Bosnia and Croatia have earned their spurs.

As a former soldier, my only reservation about female troops is when mothers leave their kids to go to war, even when it's mostly "war-watching." It seems a distortion of priorities — especially in cases (and there are a surprising number of them) where the husband and father is in the army too, and both are on overseas UN duty. Surely the military can come up with a policy to avoid this, even at the risk of forbidding mothers of young children from combat duty. The military is not a democracy, and a policy whereby two soldier parents cannot leave their children at the same time does not seem unreasonable.

Still, the continuing debate of women in the military is unlikely to be resolved until there is actual fighting to be done: maybe the "experiment" would unravel in full-scale war. Despite the success of women in the army on UN duty, the issue is still mostly propaganda and politics. Most people who have fought in wars, as opposed to having "served" in them (and there is a considerable difference), are uneasy about the idea of women in the trenches, sharing the ordeals, dangers and realities of fighting troops. And this isn't necessarily old-fashioned military chauvinism, or misguided gentlemanly behavior.

A case can be made that women can fly combat aircraft as capably as men, but that's war at a distance. The infantry role is down and dirty, and there isn't much precedent for women in the trenches, except in specialist roles (like women snipers in the Red Army in the Second World War, where they were exceptionally adept).

The only successful example of women at the front that I know of is Eritrea, where the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) fought a 28-year guerrilla war against Ethiopia, which got more lethal when the homicidal Marxist regime of Colonel Mengistu deposed Emperor Haile Selassie in 1974. Necessity forced the EPLF to bring women into combat. A population of three million fighting a country of 40 million with the largest, most modern army in Africa (Soviet-supplied), has little choice but to use every resource.

I was with the Eritrean "fighters" (they prefer that term to soldiers, or army, since it includes everyone) in 1988 when they routed a crack Ethiopian corps at what's called the Battle of Afabet, which spelled the beginning of the end for Ethiopia. Some 30% of the Eritrean "fighters" were women. At Afabet, the Eritreans posted two ambushes on roads leading through the mountains behind Ethiopian lines. The first ambush was some five miles back, the second 10 miles behind that. When the Eritreans launched a massive attack on the Ethiopian front, the Ethiopians pulled back into the first ambush, broke through with enormous casualties, and thought they were home free. The second ambush wiped them out: The Eritreans knocked out the lead tank and the rear tank, thus trapping all tanks, vehicles, guns, and equipment in between. Everything was lost. Some 10,000 prisoners were taken, and a like number killed.

Women were in the thick of the fighting. There were women platoon commanders of proven ability, and they had little trouble getting men to obey. They were brave, resourceful, innovative. Women took casualties, were regarded as equals; there was no apparent sexual discrimination. In talking to commanders, it emerged that the Eritreans found when they had a few women scattered in the ranks — token women fighters, you might say — all sorts of problems

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developed. Sex reared its mischievous head. Men would compete for favors or attention; they would be over-protective; jealousies flared; rape occurred. But when more women were involved — 30% was the optimum figure — rivalries faded. The abnormal life of the trenches became more normal. The Eritreans were adamant that the key thing was the numbers — better no women at the front than a few, best of all 30% or more women. I understand that women adjusted well to fighting with the Contras in Nicaragua — again, necessity dictating that all resources be used.

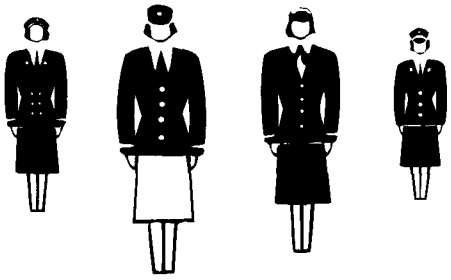
In the meantime, the Canadian army's experience with women on the firing line in Croatia and Bosnia is encouraging to enthusiasts who wish to send women to war. If the great experiment is working, it's because women who join the army these days tend to leave extremism and militancy behind, don't have a chip on their shoulders and genuinely want to be soldiers. ◆

Peter Worthington was the founding editor of the Toronto Sun *and is now a columnist and roving correspondent for that newspaper.*

… But is the entry of women turning the military into a bureaucratic "post-office-with-guns?" ***Rowan Scarborough*** reports from Washington

The Pentagon's methodical push to open an increasing number of jobs to women is playing well politically: Despite the recent Republican sweep of Congress, only a few hard-line conservatives are raising questions. A scant number of lawmakers, among them Rep. Robert K. Dornan of California, seem willing to expose the sensitive issue to public hearings. Thus Congress may never investigate the full effect of the feminization of the military.

Yet has egalitarianism brought about a degradation of standards? Has sexual tension in some units lowered morale? The few spot studies that exist say the answer is "yes." Some examples:



In 1993, the Army assembled four experimental basic training companies of about 480 recruits each at Fort Jackson. To study how each company performed, one company was composed in a proportion of about 75% men and 25% women; another was 50-50; a third was all female and a fourth all male. The study revealed that cohesion levels were low for all soldiers, but especially for men in the two integrated companies.

Primarily due to pregnancies, military women experienced a "non-ready" rate three to four times higher than that of men when American troops in the United States and Europe were deployed to the Persian Gulf.

More than 36,000 children of single military parents or dual military couples were separated from their parents during the Gulf War. A panel of Pentagon experts testified in 1992 that the separations caused anxiety as well as sleeping and eating disorders among the children.

Army Major Glen Hawkins, a 1973 West Point graduate assigned to the Army's Center for Military History, compiled a 1992 report at the Pentagon stating the academy had lowered physical standards so women cadets could perform on par with men — at least on paper. "In the interest of eliminating the embarrassing spectacle of large percentages of female cadets straggling in behind the unit, and the morale problems this caused, the Military Academy decided to forgo the cohesion benefits derived from unit formation runs," Hawkins wrote. For example, "Recondo," a week of stressful, fast-paced combat training, was eliminated in 1981 "primarily due to difficulties encountered by women successfully completing the [endurance] run." Cadets also no longer run in combat boots, Hawkins reported, because women experienced a high rate of stress fractures and blisters.

A poll conducted in 1992 by the Roper Organization found that a majority of American fighting men opposed going into battle with women at their side. Commissioned by the Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, the Roper poll discovered that 57% of active-duty personnel wanted to continue the Pentagon ban on women in

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direct combat. Forty-two percent said the exclusion should be lifted. The poll uncovered the stiffest resistance to female combatants among fighter pilots, infantrymen and Marines.

Despite this opposition, in 1993 then-Defense Secretary Les Aspin moved to put women into combat aircraft and combat ships. And since then, senior civilians at the Pentagon have made it known to field commanders that they want sex integration to work. That message, however, is not being heard by all units. Some elements, especially Navy fighter squadrons, complain that corners are being cut to make sure women qualify for combat slots. After Lieutenant Kara Hultgreen was killed in October as she attempted to land her F-14A fighter on the carrier USS *Abraham Lincoln,* anonymous male fighters alleged she had a poor training record.

The Navy vehemently denied the charges and Lt. Hultgreen's family produced personnel records to show that she met all the standards. Still, the episode revealed a certain level of male resentment.

Women who have benefited from the military's sexual revolution, on the other hand, are adamant their contributions have only improved the institution. "There's no question that in the part that we have played we have demonstrated we are fully compatible and function as team players," says Lieutenant Colonel Charlotte Kimball, 41, a supply officer with the 25th Infantry Division, now employed in Haiti. "I don't think there has been any difficulty with the stages that we have gone through. There have been a lot of changes over the last 20 years. When I came in women were new in the maintenance field. Now it's commonplace. Probably in another five years or so they'll forget women didn't used to fly attack helicopters."

Women currently make up more than 12% of the 1.5 million active-duty force. After the Gulf War, and with little debate, the Senate and House of Representatives voted to open combat aircraft and ships to women, putting them closer to battle then ever before. This was despite the 13 women soldiers who were killed in action during the war, and the two females taken prisoner of war, including Major Rhonda Cornum, a helicopter pilot who said her Iraqi captors sexually abused her. Secretary Aspin then went further than Congress and identified thousands of additional positions, such as combat engineers, as suitable for women. Only slots in land combat units, where upper body strength is a must for one's own and the unit's safety, remain off-limits to females. Pentagon officials say privately that they have bumped up recruiting targets for women as it gets more difficult to attract males to the more insecure military of the post-Cold War era. The army recently also launched an experimental program to see if weight-lifting will improve women's strength enough to equal men's. For six months, 40 women will work out under the eye of an Olympic-trials decathlete, hauling 75-pound backpacks and lifting heavy boxes. If successful, the Army hopes well-developed women soldiers can be assigned to tasks now limited to men.

Last January, however, the Navy disclosed it had shipped five women off the carrier USS *Dwight D. Eisenhower* because they were pregnant. The "Ike," now deployed in the Mediterranean, is the first carrier to have women sailors — about 450 of the ship's 5,000 crew. The disclosure raised the question of whether the carrier's readiness was hurt. Defense Secretary William Perry replied "no."

"Pregnancy is a fact of life and it will happen a certain percentage of the time," he told reporters. "What I am concerned with, what personnel commanders have to be concerned with, is, statistically is that an important problem? Is it causing a significant degradation of readiness and duty? Absolutely not."

Whatever the effects of women in combat, though, there is little chance now that the Pentagon will continue to open additional combat slots so long as Republicans control Congress. Says Rep. Dornan, who chairs the House National Security Subcommittee on Personnel, "Everything has stopped at the Pentagon whether they know it or not." ◆

Rowan Scarborough is Pentagon correspondent for the Washington Times.

New Evidence Suggests Marriage *Does* Make You Conservative

Ed Miller of the Luntz Research Companies tells *The Women's Quarterly* that his company's polling data reveals a "marriage gap" in voting last November: Married people were more likely to have voted Republican than their single counterparts. "A majority of married voters, both with (55%) and without kids (53%) cast GOP ballots," he reports. "Singles with no kids were split between the two major parties, with 43% for each. Singles with kids were slightly more likely to vote Democratic than Republican (45% vs. 43%)." Miller notes that single parents are more likely to be women than men.

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The Token Man

The Sullen Wife

David Frum dreads the arrival of this irritating dinner guest

It's shortly past eight o'clock. The drinks are flowing, music is playing. The doorbell rings, and the early guests all stiffen with attention. The distinguished guest from out of town has arrived. You rush to open the door, and there he is. And, you realize with sinking heart, there *she* is: the Sullen Wife.

One look at her hostile face and you can glimpse in advance the whole shambles your carefully arranged dinner party is about to become. Either she will sit aloof and baleful for the next four hours, silently communicating to the room that some terrible wrong has been done to her. Or else she will fire off one bitter remark after another, all meant to expose the man everyone else in the room admires as a blowhard and phony.

I always wonder, when I meet her on my doorstep, what I have done to this woman to make her decide to ruin my party. Why can't she do what her grandmother would have done—gulp a stiff crème de menthe on the way 'out the door and keep a cheerful front for company?

Instead, the trouble starts from the first introduction. "Andy, Ellen, I'd like you to meet John and Jill Smith." "*Jones*—Jill *Jones.*" And things rapidly get worse.

Every time her husband speaks, Jill checks her watch and grimaces a little. My wife remembers that the soup is boiling, and vanishes. The other guests edge away. The distinguished guest, I notice, has settled into a chair the maximum distance possible from his wife's. Jill is now formally my problem. And she'll stay that way for the rest of the evening because, of course, her place at the table is right beside mine.

In the long pauses after each of my failed conversational gambits, I will sometimes try to figure out what's bugging this woman. It's not shyness. Shy people aren't angry, and can be drawn into conversation with the right sort of question. Not the Sullen Wife. If you can prod her into talking, she erupts in nastiness and resentment:

"Do you like Washington?"

"I hate it. We only moved because John was afraid 'Nightline' wouldn't call him if we went on living in Madison. Of course, 'Nightline' never did call."

It's not my business to take sides in an unhappy marriage. For all I know, John really is awful to her. But *I* haven't been awful to her. Why is she taking out her resentments on me?

Actually, she has a reason—not an adequate reason, but a reason. The Sullen Wife is a far more ideological creature than the Thwarted Wife of a generation or two ago. Her problem is bigger than ordinary marital unhappiness, bigger even than the asphyxiating dominance of an egotistic mate. The Sullen Wife has at hand, and on her bookcase, a whole ideology devoted to transforming her mundane human sadness into a political grievance. She isn't the victim of an unwise choice made at age 25, not at least, in her own mind. She is the victim of a massive system of male oppression. And so long as the men and women around the table go on laughing at her husband's funny stories—stories she wearied of back when the dollar was worth seven francs—we are her co-oppressors. Why shouldn't she show us that she dislikes us?

Not to say that all Sullen Wives share precisely the same grievance. You can in fact devise a taxonomy of their differences. There is the wife who feels eclipsed by her husband, like the most memorably Sullen Wife we've entertained, the wife of a general who had suddenly been catapulted into fame at age 60. There is the ideologically disgruntled wife, like the woman I once met in a friend's house: She'd married a bright young man on President Carter's staff, only to see him drift into the Republican Party. And there is the Madame Bovary wife, who decides after 17 years of marriage that she can no longer bear the way her husband sips his soup, and has learned from feminism to blame James Watt, Adam Smith and George Washington for her personal problems. All of these women are beneficiaries, if that's the right word, of the gigantic excuse-making industry that labors in talk show studios, in glossy magazines, in serious movies and in million-dollar books to persuade Americans that it's healthy self-expression to behave in ways that stuffy old grandma would have called swinish.

The party breaks up immediately after dessert, when the Sullen Wife hisses her husband a reminder that he's going to have to make breakfast for the kids after keeping her up so late. As the plates go into the washer, my wife will repeat for me the conversation at her end of the tablecloth. Then she'll ask compassionately, "Things looked pretty grim at your end. How was it down there?"

I used to tell the whole story. Now I just shrug. "Oh, the usual." ●

David Frum is the author of Dead Right *(New Republic Books: 1994).*

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Dispatch

By Day Her Husband Lived, Invisible

Anne Applebaum visits a woman who waits for her hero to return from the forest after 46 years

Perloja, Lithuania

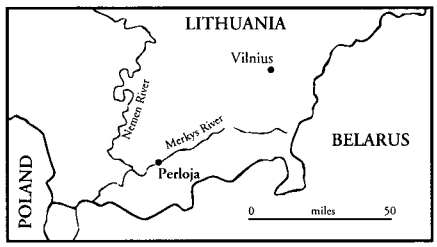
Ona Baubliene lived on the other side of Perloja, and at first I thought that she might be away. No one answered when I knocked on the door of her tiny wooden house. I peered inside but saw only an iron stove, a single bed and a black cat.

When I finally found Ona, she was standing in her muddy field, hands on her hips, surveying the pile of dirty potatoes she had just scraped out of the earth. Her green plaid shirt and thick brown skirt hung off her body in folds, her white headscarf gave a severe cast to her flattish face. Her boots were black and heavy, as they had to be in such wet country. She had all of her teeth.

"He is alive, I know he is alive, if that's what you want to know," she said.

Ona Baubliene was the wife of Perjola's greatest partisan hero, but she wouldn't come and have a cup of tea. The ground would be frozen soon, there were still potatoes to dig and a neighbor was coming with a horse this afternoon to help. The fog had cleared, the sun was out — it was a pity not to work.

"If you want to talk to me," she said, "you have to stand right here." And that was the beginning of the story,



because Ona Baubliene's potato patch lay right in the center of what had once been disputed land.

"That side of the Merkys was Lithuania before the war," she began, pointing toward the rushing stream that ran alongside her field. "This side was Poland." Nowadays, the Perlojans crossed the Merkys on a suspension bridge made of rope. Once, Ona explained there was a sturdy wooden bridge instead of a suspension bridge, and Polish soldiers stood on her side of it.

Back then, the Perlojans didn't like the Poles: "You can't like anyone who speaks a different language and stands in your backyard holding a rifle, can you?" The Poles forced Ona's elder brother and his friend Jonas to serve in the Polish Army, so they plotted revenge. During their leave, they asked Ona to smuggle secret army documents to relatives across the border. In those days girls did what their elder brothers told them to do — and Ona was in love with Jonas. She sewed the papers into her skirt.

"You take up the hem of the inner skirt like this, you see, folding it over twice, and then you just put a few stitches along the edge right here," said Ona, demonstrating.

Ona was driving her geese across the bridge when the Poles stopped her, frisked her, and found the papers, shouting, "Sabotage! Spies!" Ona's brother and his friend Jonas spent the years before the war in a jail near Krakow. While they were gone, Ona grew tired of waiting and married Baublys.

Fate had tied her to a hero. Baublys was tall and blond like many of the Perlojans. He was too young to have fought for the Perlojan Republic, but he loved the village as much as anyone else. He had a famous tenor voice and played the accordion; he was a hunter and an excellent shot. Years later, a local Communist party member told Ona that her bandit husband had shot at him in the forest. She looked him in the eye and said, "I don't believe it. If he had aimed at you he would have hit you."

Baublys' career as a man of great escapes began in 1940, just after the Soviet occupation of Lithuania. At first the Perlojans had been pleased by the

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changes. The new borders put Perloja as well as Vilnius back on the Lithuanian side, and the Polish guards disappeared. But then, very quickly, rumors began. The Russians, who seemed to own nothing at all — why else did they covet everyone else's land? — were rounding up all the peasants who owned more than 30 acres. There were stories of cattle trains and transport trucks, tales of Siberia and people who disappeared without a trace.

One day when Ona and her sisters were out in the fields, they heard a great drumming noise, as if an army were approaching; a man was running over the bridge, shouting, "They are coming, they are coming!" All of the women lay down among the tomato plants in the vegetable garden. Baublys and the other men ran to the barn — but the Russians saw them. A little bit later, they led one of the neighbors and his two sons out of the yard and took them away to Siberia. Baublys was not among them. He emerged a few hours later, covered with bran and oats, grinning from ear to ear.

When the Germans came in 1941, no one knew anything about Nazis, but once again everyone thought the change was for the good. Perloja was still in Lithuania, and Baublys, flushed with patriotism, became chief of the local Lithuanian police. That was all very well — until things began to go sour. The Germans were also suspicious of the Lithuanians, and began locking up those whose loyalty they suspected; there were terrible stories, as well, of what they were doing to Jews. Eventually, the Germans ordered all Lithuanian police, including the Perlojan police, to the Eastern Front. A handful of Perlojan policemen forged passports and hid themselves in barns and outhouses, but a Pole from Rudiskes betrayed them. Only Baublys ducked out of the cellar where he was hiding, and rode home that night on a bicycle.

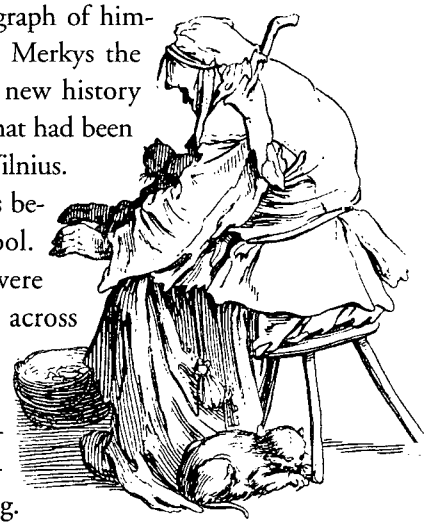
By the time of the second Soviet invasion, in 1944, the Perlojans — wiser now — no longer believed that any change was for the better. Baublys' brother, cursing the new occupiers, retreated with the Germans and went to live in Australia. But Baublys, invoking the ideals of the Republic of Perloja, refused to leave his village in her hour of need. Instead, he ran away to join the partisans in the forest. Soon afterward, three railroad junctions, two post offices and a commissar were said to have fallen victim to his grenades.

Now Baublys was no longer just a man with a talent for escaping prison; he had also become a genuine hero. In their kitchens and gardens, in hushed voices and whispers, all of Perloja spoke of nothing but Baublys, always calling him "Merkys," his partisan alias, taken from the name of the stream that ran through Ona's potato patch. Neighbors brought food to Ona in gratitude for the deeds of her husband. Men tipped their hats to her in the street. For two years Ona felt as if she were married to one of the tree gods of her ancestors. By day her husband lived, invisible, in the forest; by night, in the lulls between acts of sabotage, he paid surprise visits. Until 1947, there still seemed to be hope. In that year, the commissars sent Ona to Siberia, where she remained for 15 years. She never saw her husband again. Much later — "oh, it was sometime in the 1960s" — a woman told Ona that the Perloja partisans had died in 1949, when the commissars surrounded their bunkers. There were 12 of them left. They burned their papers and shot themselves. But one man was said to have escaped, and everyone believed that it had to be Baublys.

Throughout the gray '50s, the sullen '60s, the stultifying '70s, right up until 1989, the police interrogated Ona. Every spring, almost always at planting time, they came to her door, asking for news of Baublys.

"And if I had seen him," she told them every spring, "do you think I would be telling you?" There was nothing for her to be afraid of; she had already been to Siberia.

Ona leaned against her fence, a broken-down affair made up of wooden staves, old plastic and wire. "I am sure he is still alive, somewhere out there in the forest," she said. "He was never a man to shoot himself, and he is certainly not a man to be caught. Soon he will come for me." She was sure that he wanted to see his grandchildren. She was sure he wanted to hear of his fame, she was sure he would want to see the photograph of himself dressed as Merkys the partisan, in a new history of Lithuania that had been published in Vilnius.



The air was beginning to cool. The clouds were moving faster across the sky — the wind was behind them — and the sunlight was fading.

"I am waiting," Ona told me. "Soon, very soon, I am sure he will decide that it is safe to come out." ◆

From the book Between East and West *by Anne Applebaum. Reprinted by permission of Pantheon Books, a division of Random House, Inc.* © *1994 by Anne Applebaum.*

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Continued from page 1

is right, it will be women who deliver the deathblow to the state's sex and race preferences.

But beyond the California vote, there is a deeper question of why women may be turning against affirmative action. The most obvious reason is that women no longer view themselves as the chief beneficiaries of affirmative action — a perception that Jesse Jackson and the feminist organizations were trying hard to dispel by standing together at the podium that day.

There is a widespread belief in many workplaces that being a woman is no longer an advantage from the point of view of affirmative action administrators (many of whom are women too). The work force has been saturated by women with degrees, training and qualifications. There are fewer and fewer employers who are desperate to fill a "female" quota.

"White females have been pushed down the list in terms of preference," says sociologist Frederick R. Lynch, author of *Invisible Victims.* "It's no big deal to hire a white female anymore." An executive recruiter in Washington, who insists his firm doesn't conduct "affirmative action searches," admits the employer will sometimes express a preference. "All things being equal," he reports, "they'd like to hire a minority, and minority tends to be African-American, Hispanic or Asian — rarely women."

The diminishing returns of affirmative action are particularly felt by young women entering the work force. By now the formal and informal barriers that once kept women out of many fields have come down. The white female college graduate is likely to face the same employment problems that have confronted her male classmates for the past decade: a limited number of slots, competition for promotions and the denial of jobs because of "set-asides" for minority applicants.

Even in the instances when women are still hired to meet a quota, it is not always to redress perceived discrimination — quite the opposite. It can be a way of circumventing requirements for a minority candidate. A philosophy professor at a small, elite college told me that it is common practice for academic departments to hire women to meet affirmative action guidelines because, "We have trouble finding qualified minority candidates but it is easy to find a qualified woman."

In fact, a new study to be published in the April issue of *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* suggests affirmative action's central justification — that by promoting women in non-traditional fields and creating "role models," more women will follow — simply isn't panning out. The study, by Princeton economics professor Harvey Rosen and Brandice Canes, a graduate student at Stanford, found that there was no statistically significant rise in the number of female majors in departments where there had been an increase in the hiring of female professors.

The recently released report of the Federal Glass Ceiling Commission tried to salvage the case for affirmative action for women by stating that just 5% of senior executive management positions are held by women. Yet that misleading figure is based only upon a study of Fortune 1000 companies. Outside this elite group, women now hold 45% of all managerial jobs and 53% of all professional jobs, according to the Labor Department. Further evidence shattering the Glass Ceiling Commission's perception of women's progress was reported by *Newsweek*: One of the two studies the commission relied upon has since been revised: Women now hold 10% of the very top executive positions, up dramatically from 1.5% in the mid-1980s. In fact, women in management have done quite well. Economist June O'Neill has found that the earnings of women between the ages of 27 and 33 who don't take time out for child rearing are now 98% of men's.

Women's advancement in the workplace, then, seems indisputable. Yet should affirmative action get all the credit? Some researchers say no. "My own sense of the data," says Lynch, "is that primarily it's cultural change and enforcement of non-discrimination, not necessarily preferential treatment."

The final undoing of affirmative action in women's minds, however, may not stem from consideration of their own careers. Women know the men who have been victims of affirmative action's reverse discrimination or men who consider themselves to be victims. They are their husbands, brothers or sons. Non-working women — or women temporarily out of the work force to raise children — count on their husbands' salaries and promotions to support their families. "The angriest people [I interviewed] were the wives of men who had suffered reverse discrimination," says Lynch.

This "stand by your man" factor may turn out to be the force that causes female voters to reject affirmative action — first in California, and then across the nation. ◆

Ellen Ladowsky is a Washington-based journalist.

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One last observation . . .

Two Boyfriends Ago, Three Girlfriends Back

A story about love in the projects by ***Iva Pekarkova***

My friend Catherine measures time in boyfriends. "Oh yeah, that must have been way before Marty," she says, or "My mother died in the space between Miguel and Richard."

Our loves don't live in pretty little houses anymore, a maple tree protecting the roof and a brook babbling in the valley. Our loves have moved into housing projects, huge apartment buildings filled with units .... You don't even know where I lived three boyfriends ago. Now we're dragging furniture down the hall, yours to that apartment in the southwest wing, mine to ... well, I'll have to think about it some more. I have stayed in the room we'd shared by myself for a while, smelling your scent on the pillow, finding a tight little lock of your hair decorating my bathtub. You have sealed my picture in an envelope because you don't want to see my face, but you also don't want to lose it. A few women down the road, you might take it out again and frame it and put it on the wall, just like you hung the picture of your wife years after she'd left you. You called me up and asked, "Who were you with last night?"

I've woken up three mornings in a row next to a man who looks like a tree. I gorge myself on the smell of his dreadlocks; I bury my eyes in the color of his shoulders to make my night longer. His arms remind me of sleeping in the woods. On his head grow 300 fragrant branches.

His initials spell "IQ" and he confessed he used to smuggle, but that was, oh, scores of girlfriends back. IQ can do six or seven argots of the street; over the phone he can tell Bedford-Stuyvesant from Red Hook. He studied art. I made him kneel down and swear that he never used to shoot up. Inch by inch I traced his veins. His body is smooth, but needle marks do disappear. He wrapped a thin silver bracelet around my wrist. "Don't ever take it off." Two tiny silver arms hug my wrist, and IQ knows how to hug, too. He says he's looking for something real.

Maybe love is a diamond we are born with and whenever we lose somebody a chip falls off. Splinters of love litter the pavement in the East Village, making it sparkle. IQ's touches don't penetrate my crust, not yet. I want to shed off the thick layer of fingerprints; I roll around in diamond dust; I bleed.

IQ is dragging furniture down the hall to my place; he wants to move in. There's not enough room for his computer. His dresser doesn't fit through the door.

I vomit every morning: I think it's the sour taste of the previous night's beer, the loneliness of the housing projects through which wanders our love.

Until I find that you've forgotten your baby inside me when you moved out. ◆

Iva Pekarkova's most recent novel is The World is Round *(Farrar Straus Giroux: 1994).*

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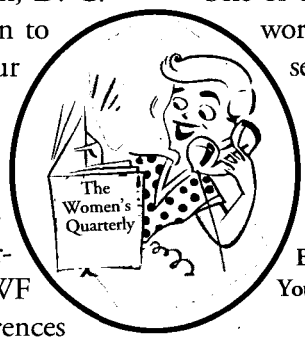

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